

# Pittsburgh Steelers

## Media Conference

Sunday, September 18, 2022  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

### Mike Tomlin

#### Postgame Press Conference

New England - 17, Pittsburgh - 14

MIKE TOMLIN: Really one of those really tight ball games that's going to come down to a few things, and we knew that going in. That's why you put the weight on the weighty downs or the situational moments. They made more splash plays in that circumstance than we did.

I thought they won the field position game and special teams. They got a couple kickoff returns from a field positioning standpoint. Obviously, when we didn't handle the punt, that was a significant play. The two-minute go ball was a significant play, and sometimes when you're in games like this, that's the difference. It felt like it was today.

Obviously, there was some good. There was some bad outside of those things, but I thought those were the critical weighty things, where they were able to control the game, particularly kind of in the fourth quarter as we were trying to regain control of it.

I just thought they got propped up by those plays, and we didn't do what was required. We didn't make the significant chunks or move the ball well enough on offense, and obviously at the end we didn't get the necessary stop on defense.

It's painful, but it is. It's important that we zero our focus in on this short week. That's what we were just talking about in there. Obviously there's some things to learn from this performance, but we'd better learn quickly and shift our focus because we've got a road division game here in a short period of time.

Don't have a lot of information regarding injuries. I know Devin Bush wasn't able to finish the game. He's got a foot that's being evaluated. Other than that, I don't have a lot of information.

**Q. You talked about the good and the bad. Can you comment on what you thought was good?**



MIKE TOMLIN: We had our moments. We won some possession downs on offense. We won some possession downs on defense. But again, I just -- that seven points in the two-minute circumstance and then the ability to put seven points on the board after we didn't handle the punt were the significant components to the game.

**Q. As far as deep throws, throws over the middle, is that just quarterback decisions?**

MIKE TOMLIN: They're a group that really specializes in minimizing big plays, splash plays defensively. That's been their calling card. McCourty's been back there in the middle of the field for a long time.

So we knew the game would be challenging from that perspective.

**Q. When you got the ball late against Cincinnati in overtime, you were able to get that long drive. You had the same circumstance and weren't able to. What were you seeing that you came up short in that two-minute drill this time?**

MIKE TOMLIN: They made plays. New England did. They made plays.

**Q. What do you think of Mitch's performance in general?**

MIKE TOMLIN: I have to look at the tape in terms of an evaluation standpoint, but obviously we collectively didn't make enough plays today, he included.

**Q. Do you think Mitch had a slow start again, maybe a little slower?**

MIKE TOMLIN: I hadn't analyzed it in that way. I look at it collectively.

**Q. How do you evaluate the pass rush without T.J.?**

MIKE TOMLIN: I thought New England would do a good job of minimizing that component of our game by running the football, by rhythm throws, things of that nature. So I



didn't necessarily go into this game thinking it was going to be a seven-sack type game. It just wasn't going to unfold that way. Their style of play wasn't going to allow that to happen.

**Q. Your thinking behind the big front you used, instead of two OLBs much of the time, you used Cam outside and Leal outside?**

MIKE TOMLIN: They were going to run the ball. We were down an outside linebacker or two, so we just felt that was the appropriate approach to take for multiple reasons.

**Q. How do you accept play of the offensive line today?**

MIKE TOMLIN: Again, we didn't make enough plays. I haven't combed through it from an individual perspective or from a groups within the group perspective. I just acknowledged New England made some significant plays. In a game like that, it's going to come down to a couple of plays, and we didn't make enough of them.

**Q. How do you feel about -- it seemed like there was a lot of wide open plays that were left on the table. How do you feel about that?**

MIKE TOMLIN: I don't know that I have that perspective, so I don't have a comment.

**Q. Did you expect that George Pickens would be a little more involved in the offense to this stage?**

MIKE TOMLIN: I don't know that I had expectations about what that would look like. I think in the early portions of the year, man, you're establishing roles, and what happens in the stadium is more important than maybe what your intentions are. Intentions are just that.

The reality of how we perform, how we divide the labor up, and how we distribute the ball and who makes the plays is what's important in the stadium.

**Q. Last week you said you were a little conservative because of the game situation, you got the lead and whatnot. Did you come in thinking you wanted to be a little less conservative or attack a little more?**

MIKE TOMLIN: I don't know that we had that perspective. We just wanted to win possession downs. I was really up front about that at the outset of the week. We knew it would be a possession down game, and we won some of those, but not enough splash, particularly in the weighty moments.

**Q. When you have a short week, how is just your**

**initial evaluation of the team health-wise going into Thursday night's game?**

MIKE TOMLIN: Again, I don't have a lot of information, like I mentioned at the opening.

**Q. On the go ball to Agholor, is there much more Witherspoon can do there?**

MIKE TOMLIN: Yeah, play the ball above eye level. He's a big guy. Got to play the ball above eye level.

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